# NEWSPAPER MAKING.

## American Publishers Have Faith in the Combination Idea.

**Thoughts Suggested by an Englishman's Talk About a Journalistic Trust—Wonders of the Mail Plate System.**

[Special Chicago Letter.]

COMBINATIONS rule the day. It may be true, as Senator Marcus Aurelius Hanna, Ohio's world-famed president maker, said in the heat of last year's campaign, that there are no "trusts;" but that the country is full of all sorts of combinations not even the astutest politician could deny without making a spectacle of himself.

Reckless competition is the basis of combination and cooperation. Whenever competition assumes that form of extravagance which threatens to ruin a certain line of business the men engaged in it must either go into bankruptcy or save themselves by agreeing, one with the other, that the goods produced in their factories shall not be sold below a certain price. This is legitimate combination, quite as fair and equitable as any other business proposition having in view the best interests of the community at large. On this basis, also, our great trade unions have been built up; and no American citizen, be he employer or workingman, can deny that legitimate organization has done more for the cause of labor in one generation than has been accomplished in 19 centuries of competition between underpaid journeymen and artisans.

To the American country newspaper publisher belongs the credit of having been the first to arrive at a true understanding of the business value of combination and cooperation. Before the war between the states the average country newspaper was published at a heavy expense. Few editors managed to make both ends meet. Their business life was a constant struggle for existence. Competition had reduced advertising rates and cut subscription prices below the cost price. But early in the sixties, at a time when money was getting scarcer and labor harder to procure than ever, the late A. N. Kellogg, then a country editor up in Wisconsin, solved the problem which was agitating his fellow publishers by inaugurating the auxiliary sheet—better known as the patent inside—business. The idea, although revolutionary and contrary to all editorial traditions, became popular at once, and was adopted by hundreds of western publishers who, by it, were enabled to issue good papers at a nominal expense.

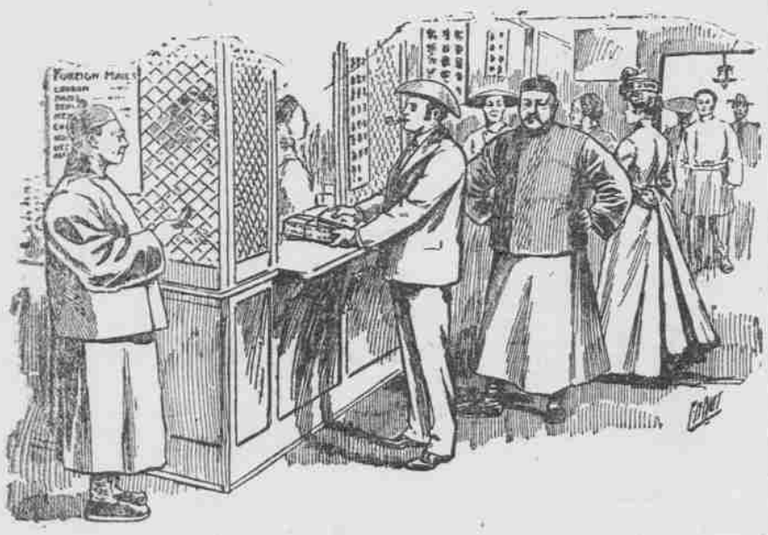
A few years later the stereotype business—another industry founded on the principle of combination and cooperation—was launched. Its purpose was to supply the editors of newspapers printed in the larger towns with stereotype plates that could be used in place of the much higher priced hand composition. The business was a success from the start. It not only improved the standard of newspaper reading matter, but proved to be of vast advantage to wage-earners in the printing trades because, like the auxiliary sheets, it led to the publication of scores of newspapers in every part of the country.

MAIL PLATE AND BASE.

The large city papers were inclined to ridicule the "patent inside" and "plate" business; and for years the pompous editorial magnates instructed their "funny men" to make game of the enterprise. But eventually they, too, were made the victims of fierce competition. Men from 'way out in the west invaded the newspaper field in New York and other eastern cities; papers formerly sold at five cents a copy had to be offered for two cents or a penny, and some hitherto proud and supercilious publishers had great difficulty in making the "ghost walk of Saturday afternoons." Expenses had to be cut to avoid ruin. Instead of collecting city news independently, the publishers formed organizations for jointly obtaining routine information of every description. From this hint proceeded the organization of the so-called literary "syndicate," which buys articles and sells them to editors all over the country at a merely nominal price. To-day there is not a metropolitan paper in the United States which does not make copious use of this "syndicate" stuff; and one Sunday paper, barring the local news, looks very much like another, whether it be published in New York, Chicago or San Francisco. Several years ago the writer, while a guest of the Lotus club at New York, asked a well-known American author why these manuscript dealers called their enterprises "syndicates." "I suppose," he replied, "because the stuff usually offered to the public by our financial syndicates is no good. A mere case of imitation, you see."

There is now in this country an English editor and publisher, Mr. Alfred Harmsworth, who is entitled to our respect and admiration because he has had the hardihood and good sense of introducing American newspaper methods in the management of the London Mail. Mr. Harmsworth has declared himself in favor of combination and has suggested the formation of a mammoth syndicate—a real syndicate—which is to control the publication of all the great newspapers of the world. He would organize a stock company with a vast paid-up capital for the purpose of buying up all the profitable papers in Europe and America and freezing out the stragglers. The combination would collect its own news, build its own telegraph and cable lines, manufacture its own paper and build its own machinery. It would be, in short, the most powerful and unique international enterprise ever conceived.

Mr. Harmsworth's colossal dream probably is not destined to be realized in our time, but it happens to remind the writer of a most interesting international literary and business enterprise that came under his observation a few days ago, called the Mail Plate Co. of Chicago. This concern, like the stereotype plate houses, sends out ready-set matter of a high character to its customers, most of whom are doing business in out-of-the-way places. The stereotype plate is a heavy article which is advantageously used by American publishers, but to send it to the orient or occident would entail express charges quite beyond the reach of the nominally-constituted antipodean or Arctic publisher. To fill the latter's demands is the mission of the mail plate, which is manufactured of pyralin and can be sent all around the globe for a few cents. The plate itself is a thin sheet of celluloid composition. This is fastened to a metal base, which the publishers keep in stock, and when so united the plate prints as well as its metal prototype. The cut explains the modus operandi in detail.



RECEIVING MAIL PLATE IN THE POST OFFICE AT HONG-KONG.

The extent of this mail plate business is surprising, and cannot fail to be gratifying to our national vanity. Its purely American reading matter is regularly placed before men and women of every nationality. That this statement is by no means an exaggeration was satisfactorily proved by a visit to the company's shipping room, where Manager I. H. Whipple pointed out packages ready for shipment to Nome City, Skaguay, Juneau and Sitka, in Alaska; Dawson City, in Yukon territory; Mexico City, Monterey and Nueva Casas Grandes, in Mexico; Havana and Santiago, in Cuba; Belize, in British Honduras; Kingston, in Jamaica, W. I.; Moulmein, in East India; Manila, in the Philippines; Bluefields, in Nicaragua, and Auckland, in New Zealand. On the day before plates had been shipped to Cape Colony and the country of the Boer in South Africa.

It seems almost wonderful that the publisher of a paper printed in the English language in far-away Hong-Kong can, on the arrival of the steamer from San Francisco, stroll up to the post office and secure a dainty package containing a variety of articles, profusely illustrated and ably written, the the whole thing ready for the press, at a cost which must seem trifling even in those countries of the orient where labor can be had for a shilling a day.

Like the patent inside and the stereotype plate, the mail plate is a triumph of combination and cooperation, in whose advantages every newspaper reader has a share. And it is also a triumph for American inventive genius and American postal methods, which assure safe and prompt delivery at a trifling expense.

Trusts which control the output and prices of the necessities of life unquestionably are a menace to society, but healthy combinations having in view the development of general activity and the creation of new business enterprises are entitled to public respect and commendation.

G. W. WEIPPIERT.

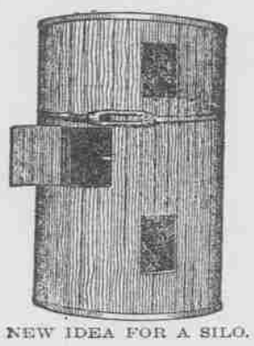
**In German cities fresh oysters cost from 60 to 75 cents a dozen.**

# AGRICULTURAL HINTS.

## A SUBSTANTIAL SILO.

**Progressive Dairymen No Longer Consider It an Experiment But an Absolute Necessity.**

I am constrained to believe that the advocates of the so-called cheap silos are making a mistake, this conclusion being drawn both from observation and personal experience. It may have been wise in the past to advise and to construct such silos, because many farmers considered it experimental, and I am willing to say now that a cheap construction is better than none at all, from the fact that few are bold enough to deny its necessity. We are warranted in advising the building of thoroughly air-tight walls. Whether we have yet reached the ideal I am not sure. We have been slowly solving during the past ten years, and shall, no doubt, make further improvements. I think,



NEW IDEA FOR A SILO.

however, that when we take into consideration both cost and value, the well-built stave silo the most satisfactory. The cut shows a section of a stave silo with staves six inches wide and 2½ inches thick. Pine, beveled to the circle, grooved and tongued, is put together with white lead, making each joint air tight, ends of staves being joined with a heavy piece of galvanized iron. The foundation is similar to any barn wall, only the wall projection is outside the silo, permitting an even, perpendicular wall on the inside. The top of the wall is so inclined that water cannot stand upon it. The inside of the wall and bottom of silo are cemented, the center being about six inches lower than the side; a basin-shaped bottom. The roof should be symmetrical, with wide cornice projections, and, if possible, so adjoining the barn as to give it a fine architectural appearance. Two coats of paint and a weather vane complete the external construction.

The cut shows some conveniences not always found. Some trouble has arisen in connection with solid iron rods, lacking flexibility; silo expansion and cold weather have caused them to break. The Page wire fence has been used to some extent, and has the advantage of overcoming to a degree this difficulty, but other objections seem to offset it, so that it has not come into general use. In casting about for a medium that would combine the good qualities of both the steel wire cable seemed to fill the bill. The strength of one-half-inch wire rope is given as one-third greater than five-eighths-inch solid iron, and at the same time possesses the flexibility so much needed. The system of fastening is the ordinary twin buckle; other means, however, may be equaly as good. The system of doors has always been a difficult one to solve. The continuous door is the only satisfactory one, yet the patent doors that I have seen are open to many objections not necessary to enumerate here. My idea was to get a door that should be continuous, hung on the outside, firmly held and always ready to use. This we secured by alternating the doors with two staves between them uncut. The heavy iron cleats formed to the circle serve also as hinges. They are bolted to a similar iron on the inside, countersunk in the door and staves. These doors are fastened with refrigerator-door fasteners, two on the lower doors and one on the doors nearer the top, holding the doors absolutely to their place. The dormer window in the roof furnishes sufficient light and a place to fill. We have, therefore, combined durability, effectiveness and convenience.—H. E. Cook, in Rural New Yorker.

**Prizes for Road Menders.**

In some English counties prizes are offered for the section of road which is kept in the best order throughout the year. There is an honorable rivalry among the roadmasters for obtaining these rewards, and the winners are proud of their distinction as champion road menders. When all the roads are preeminent for their excellence, it cannot be an easy matter for the most critical committee to make the awards, but the effect of the competition is to put every man on his mettle and to increase the efficiency of the road service. How different are these methods and processes from those which prevail in rural America, where highway commissioners draw their salaries and set gangs of laborers at work a few days before election or where farmers in the autumn, when there is nothing else to do, unite in a week's voluntary service as road menders.

Did any man ever succeed in kicking a cow into submission?—Farmers' Review.

No dairyman can afford to hire ill-tempered help to look after his cows.

## POTATO-ONION CULTURE.

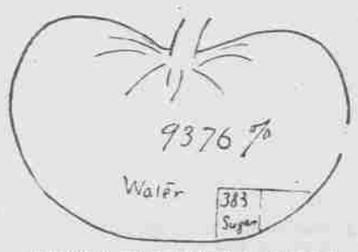
**West Virginia Farmer Describes a Method That He Has Employed for Several Seasons.**

A reader in West Virginia tells me how he raises his potato-onions, as follows: "I cover my ground with good stable manure, then plow this under, and make the surface as fine as possible by harrowing. Then I lay off the rows about 18 inches apart, and set the onions in the rows about six or seven inches apart, and cover about six inches deep. I put the large onions by themselves, and the sets by themselves. The former make sets to be planted out another fall, while the sets make the large onions for spring sales. I have early onions in spring, and what is left over I pull in July, to keep over for fall planting. I do not leave them out in the sun after pulling, but cure under shelter." I myself am not very much in favor of these rather coarse and high-flavored bulbs. For earliest onions I use the Egyptian, or Tree winter onion, which is so hardy as to grow whenever the ground is not frozen. They give me green onions for the table almost as early as spring opens and nearly by the time that we can plant sets outdoors. This I do just as soon in spring as a little patch can be gotten ready, and I always try to get Prizetaker sets, which can be as easily grown as any other sets, and are remarkably good keepers, making by far the best-flavored (mildest) green onions which I can grow from any sets obtainable. For green onions to come later by practice is to plant Prizetaker and Gibraltar seedlings (grown in greenhouses) rather close in the rows and as early in the spring as possible. Then to provide the finest green onions for late spring and summer I sow seed of the Gibraltar onion thickly in the row, almost as thickly as for sets in early spring, and repeat every few weeks for succession.—T. Greiner, in Farm and Fireside.

## THE AVERAGE TOMATO.

**Its Food Value Analyzed by Prof. Harry Snyder of the Minnesota Experiment Station.**

The extensive use of the tomato for the table has resulted in many inquiries concerning its food value. Prof. Harry Snyder, of the Minnesota experiment station, presents a series of analyses, the results of which are shown in the




WHAT A TOMATO IS MADE OF.
(I. Solids Other Than Sugar. II. Protein.)

accompanying illustration. Of course, the greater part is water. Of the nutrients sugar is by far the largest amount, being 3.83 per cent. There is a wide range in the different samples. Some specimens contain less than one per cent. and others as high as four and one-half per cent. The protein content is low and amounts usually to one-half per cent. The fat amounts to about one-half per cent., or practically the same as the protein.—Orange Judd Farmer.

## THE ASPARAGUS BED.

**Unless the Ground Is Exceedingly Well Drained, Spring Planting Is to Be Advised.**

Asparagus roots may be planted in spring or fall, but unless the ground is well drained, spring is preferable. Good strong one-year-old roots are best. The soil should be made as rich as possible. If very stony the stones should be removed, as they are much in the way of cutting the stalks. In garden culture it is best to dig trenches about three or four feet apart and 12 inches deep; then put in a layer of manure to fill about half of the trench after it has been packed down. On this put two or three inches of soil on which place the roots, spreading them out in all directions, and cover with fine soil, packing down all around. The plants should not stand closer than two feet in the rows, and as they start to grow more soil should be drawn into the trenches until the surface is level again. All that is necessary during the season is to keep the ground loose and free from weeds. To raise a first-class crop the bed has to be manured every year by scattering manure over the plants in the fall. If white or blanched asparagus is desired, the roots have to be set deeper and the rows have to be hilled up similar to what is done with celery.—Barnum's Midland Farmer.

**Rural Free Mail Delivery.**

One of the phenomenal successes in the development of our postal system has been the extension of rural free delivery. This was begun two or three years ago, with an appropriation of perhaps $300,000. It has been extended by degrees and with good judgment, and wherever it has reached, if reports are to be credited, it has been a very considerable success. The postmaster general now estimates that the system can be extended over such parts of the country as may use it to advantage at an approximate cost of $20,500,000, and he urges all kinds of reasonable economy in the administration of postal affairs in order to be able to ask for fuller appropriations in this direction. The estimate for maintaining free delivery in the next year on plans already formed is placed at $3,500,000.

# WAR REMINISCENCES

## AN ODD PREDICAMENT.

**Story of a Union Soldier Who Couldn't and Wouldn't Right Dress.**

"Did I ever tell you the story of Happy Jack?" asked the captain in the Chicago Inter Ocean. "If I did it will bear repeating. Jack came to our company in May, 1861, with a Tommy Atkins air of being indifferent to, and superior to, his surroundings. He was neatness personified, and wore his clothes jauntily. He had a horror of untidiness, and a mania for washing up, as he called it. He lisped in conversation, could not sound his r's, and was one of the few men in the regiment who could talk familiarly or jocularly with the regimental officers. Every one listened in amused toleration to Jack's remarks, and the man whose gun was always in good order and whose clothes were always clean was a general favorite.

"In the summer or early fall of 1863 Jack was in great distress of mind. The steady marching over dusty roads and the rough climbing in the mountains gave him no time to mend or wash, and for the first time in the service Jack's clothes were dirty. He said he felt like a white horse up to the middle in the ooze of a black swamp, and talked a good deal about deserting or shooting himself. But the commanding general sent us on most trying marches, many of them in pursuit of an evasive but alert enemy.

"One day, after a hard pull over the rough country, we turned into a wooded valley, and were halted on the banks of a considerable stream. Arms were stacked, and the men were informed that, while they might rest at will, no straggling would be permitted, as an engagement with the enemy was expected. This was an old story to the boys, and they freely expressed the opinion that there wasn't a reb within 20 miles of us. In fact, there were no signs of a hostile army. The woods were quiet as the pastures at home, and the little river was a sore temptation to Jack, who decided, against the advice of the orderly, to wash up.

"He was informed that the regiment might remain where it was five minutes, five hours, or five days, and that he would wash his clothes at his own risk. In five minutes Jack had removed his shirt, drawers and stockings, and, clad in blouse, trousers and shoes, was hurriedly washing his underwear. He hung the articles on the brush to dry, and still there were no signs of trouble. Then Jack removed his blouse and washed that, and, after a moment's hesitation, removed his trousers and washed them. This left him wearing only hat and shoes, and the boys put in the time chaffing him on his appearance.

"Jack, to appease the irritated captain, explained that in a few minutes his underclothing would be dry enough to put on, and that, dressed in shirt, drawers and shoes, he would be ready for business. Then a little later he would put on trousers and blouse, and be the cleanest man in the company. And things seemed to be going Jack's way. The men were at dinner, and Jack was tantalizingly calling their attention to his layout of clean clothes, when there was rapid firing on the picket line, and the pickets came in almost neck and neck with a charging rebel line.

"Men dropped hardtack and haversacks, and jumped into line to take their rifles. Jack hesitated a moment, then, buckling his cartridge belt about his naked body, took his place in line, and his rifle spoke with the others that checked the confederate advance. Jack hoped he would now have time to grab

"HOW DID YOU COME TO BE IN THIS PLIGHT, SIR?"

his clothes and scramble into them, but the maneuvering and fighting that followed carried him farther and farther from the bushes on which his clothes were drying.

"While the men of the company were laughing at Jack's plight and calling on him to 'dress up,' the fight went on, and Jack said not a word. Finally, another brigade took up the pursuit of the retreating confederates, and we were ordered to our old position along the river. Jack was again exultant, because he could see in the distance his washing taking the air and the sun, undisturbed by confederate or bullet. All seemed going Jack's way again, when the colonel, not a little proud of his command, stopped to let the regiment pass in review. He caught sight of Jack, ordered the company to halt, and Jack to step out of the ranks. He thundered at the hapless fellow a score of questions, winding up with: 'How did you come to be in this plight, sir? You are a disgrace to the regiment and the service, and I want you to tell me instantly how this happened. Answer promptly, sir.'

"Jack's comrades were in dismay, but Jack himself was cool and smiling. He presented arms, and then, bringing his rifle to order, explained how he came to wash up, and his theory about getting into his clothes in case of an alarm, and then added: 'But there was no alarm, colnel. The rebs rushed us, and there was no time for any bandbox business. There wasn't time for anything, and I just got into line, and I want to ask you, colnel, right now, if you had no clothes on, and the rebs came at you that way, and the captain was a-ragin' and the orderly was a-cussin' and the boys was a-yellin' and the bullets was a-flyin', I ask you what would you do, colnel? Answer plompt-ly.'

"The colonel looked down at Jack, at Happy Jack, never happier than in this crisis, and the sternness went out of his eyes and face, and a smile came as he said: 'I wouldn't have thought of clothes, Jack. I would have tried to do my duty. (The boys remembered when the colonel rode into a fight in dressing gown and slippers.) Go back to your quarters, if you can find them, and get into your clothes just as soon as the Lord will let you. I will put your captain under arrest for allowing you to wash up in time of battle.' But he didn't."

## A BRAVE SOUTHERN WOMAN.

**One Who Served as a Lieutenant in the Confederate Army.**

Ceraitly the most sensational part played by a woman in the civil war was that of Mme. Velasquez, a pretty young southern woman of Spanish descent, who disguised herself as a man and for many months served as

MME. VELASQUEZ DISGUISED AS A CONFEDERATE LIEUTENANT.

a lieutenant in the confederate army under the name of Lieut. Harry Buford, says the Chicago Tribune. In this capacity she took part in several battles, leading her men with great fearlessness and skill and winning the compliments of her superior officers for gallantry on the field of battle. In the latter part of the war she was made an agent of the confederate secret service, and in various disguises spent months in the north, traveling repeatedly from New York to Chicago, Philadelphia and other cities. At one time she even succeeded in getting employment under the head of the United States secret service in New York city, and in that position was able to secure information of great value to the confederacy.

At the battle of Ball's Bluff she was in command of a regiment, and the men under her charge captured more than 100 federal prisoners. It was the scene of bloodshed of which she was forced to be a witness here that finally led her to give up active service in the army and go into the secret service, which, while quite as dangerous, did not lead her constantly into the presence of wounded and dying men. During the whole of her service she was never wounded, though it is said that she often took greater chances than were necessary.

## GENERAL LOGAN'S CLOSE CALL.

**Canteen Shot from His Hand While Taking a Drink of Contraband Applejack.**

Several old soldiers were sitting in the lobby of the Palmer house relating their war experiences, says the Chicago Tribune, when one of them turned to George Burghardt, who served for two years as one of the escort of Gen. John A. Logan, and said: "Come, George, tell us that canteen story."

"It ain't much of a story," he replied. "It was in the early summer of 1862 and our regiment was on its way to Vicksburg. We had reached Champion hill and gone into camp to the left of Joe Davis' home. Along about dusk Gen. Logan sent out a squad to scout around and see what was going on. We came upon a settler's cabin which had been deserted. Some of the boys, including myself, went inside where we found several kegs of applejack. Of course we all filled our canteens and incidentally put a little under our belts. An hour later we returned to camp and when 'taps' sounded we were feeling pretty good and rolled in. Early the next morning Gen. Logan, who had heard about the applejack, sent for me and I was a trifle scared for fear he was going to reprimand me. When I appeared at his headquarters he was standing at the door waiting for me. As I drew up in front and saluted the general said: 'Burghardt, I want a drink of that applejack.'

"I felt flattered that the general should wish to drink from my canteen, so I unslung it and handed it to him. As he raised it to his lips there was a crash and the next instant it went flying over his head. A spent ball from some unknown quarter had struck it full on the side, making a big dent in it."